

These speculations can be modeled so as to produce an hypothesis involving the season of shellfish availability. If shellfish debris was a factor in disposal mode selection, then trash pit contents will indicate pit disposal primarily during the season of shellfish availability. From this theory the null hypothesis is: there is no relationship between deposition and yearly seasons. At this stage of our analysis only the sketchiest evidence can be brought to bear on testing the null, but these results are encouraging--both nutshell remains and deer frontals with attached antler are more common in the trash pits than in the midden.

Structures

This section is entered with hesitation because we are not convinced the post hole patterns or features actually define structures in the usual sense, i.e. houses. Certainly additional data are needed and we hope to collect such in forthcoming seasons. Present evidence only suggests three types of structures:

(a) Burial structures. These are small, round to oval structures encircling a human burial. Despite the small size (1.5-2.2 m in diameter), at least one of these was used for some purpose which resulted in an accumulation of midden debris within the posthole circle, followed by a burial through the floor and burning of the structure. Of two other examples of these structures, one was only partially exposed (F.S. 34-56), and the other was either partially obliterated by later features or did not inscribe a full circle (F.S. 34-118). Interpretation of these structures includes summer houses or ramadas, field houses, structures internal to a large house not revealed by our excavations, or specially constructed burial enclosures that may index differential status of the deceased. Regarding the last, it is of interest that two of the three burials within, or probably within, such structures wore the only marine shell gorgets found. Clearly additional work is needed to clarify the function of the so-called burial structures. There is no evidence that these structures or others at Donnaha had wattle-and-daub construction.

(b) Pit house. This is a square or rectangular structure ca. 2.8 m wide with an opening to the west. The walls of the pit are gradually sloped, and it seems likely that the pit formed incidentally as a result of traffic and periodic cleaning of the sand floor. Only one example was found, and it was only partially excavated (F.S. 34-140). No internal features other than an intrusive burial were found, and again additional excavation is necessary.

(c) Surface house? The single example was described for the E.U. 1 area. A series of post holes appear to define about half of an oval structure, but erosion has removed any occupation surface once present, leaving only the lowest portion of the postholes. Whether these represent a surface house, a pit house, or some other structure is unknown, but in the absence of these data we are classifying it separately.